

At Peace

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Summary: A few months after the events of H20, Laurie Strode reflects on her new life. A short piece. Ignores films outside of Halloween, Halloween II and H20.

At Peace

Laurie Strode bolted upright, sweat pouring down her face. It was something she used to feel nearly every night for twenty years – the vivid memory of his knife scraping against her shoulder, the sensation of hot blood trickling down her arm. Night after night she saw herself in that closet as he, Michael, the boogeyman or whatever the hell you want to call him, crashed through the door all over again.

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Laurie wiped the sweat from her face and stood up. She used to wake up screaming, but not anymore. The dreams were less vivid now, fuzzier and full of holes. The came to her only rarely, and even her dream-self seemed to be more at peace than before, even within the trappings of a nightmare. Tonight she had seen herself in an asylum, a resurgence of a fear that used to haunt her during her prison tenure. Michael was even there with her in the dream. His appearances in her nightmares were becoming less frequent with time.

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She never really expected to get away with stealing a government van, crashing it and desecrating a "corpse," but at the time, she didn't care. Michael had to die, to protect John and to save her own sanity, and that was the only thing that mattered. Certainly life felt hard in prison, being separated from John for two months save for the weekly visits. But two months was a short sentence, and it was also the first time she knew she was free of Michael and would never again have to fear seeing him slowly marching towards her. In that regard, it was a peaceful time.

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It was really the psychiatric evaluations that scared her. She was afraid to be separated from John and afraid to lose her chance at a normal, healthy life. Afraid to be sentenced to an asylum where she would sit staring, alone, just like her brother had done for fifteen years. So she chose her words carefully with the doctors, and took deliberate care in telling them what she thought they wanted to hear.

She was never sure it was working until she was finally released, when they told her she could just check in with a therapist once a month for the next few years. She felt like cheering when they told her. It was all she could do to simply grin from ear to ear.

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She didn't mind the therapy sessions, especially now that the press had stopped stalking her wherever she went. The first three weeks back in the real world had been an exercise in learning to dodge the tabloids. After the incidents at Hillcrest, word of her true identity got out quickly, and now everyone wanted to know what it felt like to be the blood relative of one of America's most notorious serial killers. John could scarcely make it to school and back without running into the newshounds. But pretty soon they gave up, the frenzy died down, and she managed to get a job teaching at Hillcrest again thanks to support from Norma, despite her recently acquired record. It wasn't quite as cushy as being a headmaster, but she was making a decent living. Besides, John was happy as long as they lived close to Molly.

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Making her way over to the bedroom closet, Laurie reached up to the top and shelf and pulled down a small urn. Most people would call it morbid and creepy, but the urn gave Laurie comfort, especially after her occasional nightmares. It would take Laurie some time to recover completely after twenty years of living in fear, and her quiet moments holding the urn helped to expedite the process. It was something John had helped her arrange while she was awaiting trial. Since they were the last of Michael's relatives, they got to determine what happened to his remains.

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She couldn't help but smile as she lifted the lid. Back in 1978, Michael had stalked her slowly from a distance, watching her and her friends, waiting for the right time to strike.

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"I wonder how you like it," she said half to herself, still smiling as she peered at the ashes. "Me watching you."

End
file.